Lovers on the Sand
Chapter 04

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-Silver Lining

LOVE GAME
恋愛遊戯
一話
CHAPTER 1

Right now it is the past
Where the young lord, Tou-no-Ben, of the Minister of the Center is
In a bad mood.
IT'S HOT~~~!
MASA-SUKE!
SNAP
YES, YOUNG LORD?
IT'S SO HOT I CAN'T STAND IT.
BRING SOME COLD WATER FOR ME.
AS YOU WISH.

IT'S LUKE-WARM!
NH!
GULP
...
WAFT WAFT
HERE.
I'M DEEPLY SORRY, I'LL BRING A FRESH ONE RIGHT A...
THAT'S ENOUGH!
MY HAND IS TIRED, SO YOU FAN ME.
I'M PISSED OFF.
THEN, EXCUSE ME.

He wasn't like this in the past—
When we were small we were equals in anything and he was a good playmate.
Masasuke is the child of my wet nurse, and from a young age we were raised together.
We would perform together and all the nearby adults would praise us.
We learned writing and music together,
We fought,

And then, there was that time.
THE SUN'S SETTING, MASASUKE!
YEAH, IT'S PRETTY.
...AND THE TIME THAT I CAN SPEND WITH YOU LIKE THIS
ENDS THIS SUMMER, DOESN'T IT?
...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

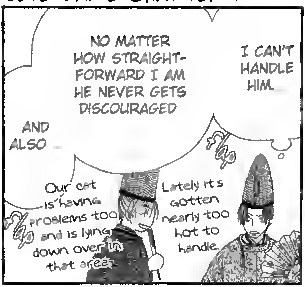
Instead of being a friend like he had been, he began acting as a servant instead.
That year I went through my adulthood ceremony and a barrier came between us and Masasuke changed.
IT'S GETTING DARK, LET'S GET BACK

Just like now, he simply obeys my commands.
THAT REMINDS ME.
WHEN THE FAMILY OF THE MINISTER OF THE RIGHT COMES THERE'S GOING TO BE A MUSIC FESTIVAL
I WANT TO PRACTICE A BIT
PLEASE ACCOMPANY ME MASASUKE
HAH -- BUT THAT'S NOT SOMETHING SOMEONE OF MY POSITION SHOULD..

In the past you used to be easy to manipulate— !!!
YOU CAN'T FOLLOW YOUR LORD'S ORDERS?!
THEN, JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE
I'LL GO FETCH THE INSTRUMENTS.
...
Aaah. . I did it again. I was the "hateful master".
SELF-——LOATHING
REMEMBER
But,
When I look at his unconcerned face I get pissed off.

"No matter what, I just feel the need to attack him."
ALTHOUGH I DON'T HAVE A HABIT OF BEING DESTRUCTIVE...
HEY, TOU-NO-BEN!

LOVE GAME CHAPTER 1


NO MATTER HOW STRAIGHT-FORWARD I AM HE NEVER GETS DISCOURAGED
I CAN'T HANDLE HIM.
AND ALSO...
Our cat is having problems too and is lying down over in that area.
Lately it's gotten nearly too hot to handle.

That's enough. I'm tired of it.
MY SISTER DOESN'T LIKE TO WRITE.
Every time I see him it's always this type of conversation.
I haven't gotten even one response to any of the letters I sent.
Why would that be?
I CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE
How could I know?

...HAA.
GRAB
Let go
Just once would be fine, if I could just see her face.
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING I CAN TELL MYSELF
I'VE HEARD THAT YOU LOOK A LOT LIKE HER
THE WESTERN PRINCESS IS PRETTY CUTE TOO
My feelings are heart-felt you know
R-RATHER THAN LATELY THAT, I'VE HEARD RUMORS ABOUT YOU WITH THE WESTERN PRINCESS?
Jerk
Oh!
SHOOSH
IF SHE LOOKS LIKE YOU THEN SHE'S CERTAINLY QUITE BEAUTIFUL

FOR THAT GUY, EVEN IF IT'S NOT MY SISTER ANY WOMAN WOULD DO!
LORD TOU-NO-CHUUJOU CERTAINLY NEEDS A RESPONSE TO HIS LOVE DECLARATIONS.
IT'S BECAUSE YOUR HONORED SISTER HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING A BEAUTIFUL SHELTERED PRINCESS.
THIS SORT OF PRETENSION IS...
BUT IT'S HARD TO GIVE UP ON YOUR SISTER
WHY ARE YOU SIDING WITH THAT GUY, MASASUKE?
WHEN YOU SAY THINGS LIKE THAT LORD TOU-NO-CHUUJOU SEEMS PITIFUL.
THAT'S
HAVE YOU EVER FALLEN IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE?
YOU TALK LIKE YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT SORT OF THING BUT

?!
HEE-EH... IS THAT SO?
WHAT SORT OF FEELING IS IT?
...I HAVE SOMEONE THAT I AM...
IN LOVE WITH
WHAT SORT...?
YOU ASK A DIFFICULT QUESTION
THAT'S RIGHT...
EVEN IF MY FEELINGS CAN'T REACH THEM,
SO LONG AS THAT PERSON IS HAPPY, THEN
I FEEL LIKE I CAN ALSO BE HAPPY.

HOW USE-LESS.
HMMM.
IT SEEMS I'VE TALKED A BIT TOO MUCH.
I APOLOGIZE FOR FORGET-TING MY PLACE.
...Masasuke already has someone like that.
IF THAT PERSON CAN SMILE,
THEN THAT ALONE MAKES ME HAPPY.

*Mii = Cicada sound

I've been feeling strange.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME...?
Even since I heard that Masasuke has a lover.
LORD TOU-NO-CHUUJOU HAS COME TO SEE YOU
I can't look Masasuke in the face...
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE CLOSE BY I NEVER GET TO SEE YOU AND I'VE BEEN LONELY~!
HUH?
IT'S HOT, AFTER ALL.
DON'T MIND ME
AAH,
Or does he want to be allowed to meet her?
THIS TIME HE'S COME TO MY HOME IS HE HERE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT MY SISTER AGAIN?
WHY IS THAT GUY HERE AGAIN...?
Shi-ke
Ishidoo

IT'S BECAUSE I'VE BEEN AVOIDING YOU
AS USUAL I HAVEN'T GOTTEN A SINGLE RESPONSE FROM YOUR SISTER...
SEE? LIKE I THOUGHT
I avoid you because I hate that sort of thing.
YOU'D THINK THAT WITH ALL THE LETTERS I'VE SENT I'D GET AT LEAST ONE LETTER BACK
IT'S LIKE MY HEART HAS SUNK TO THE DEPTH OF THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.
chatter
chatter
chatter
BUT,
IF I CAN'T GET MY HANDS ON YOUR SISTER,
THEN I THINK YOU'D BE GOOD TOO~!
Huh?!
chatter
You must also have these sorts of complaints
chatter
That's all I can think about when I think of your sister
chatter

A/N Torika e Baya is the story of the children of the minister of the left in the Heian period where the masculine daughter was raised as a boy and the feminine son was raised as a girl.

HEY!
STOP... HEY!
Hey!
OH, HOW DISAP-POINTING.
YOU REALLY ARE A MAN.
ALTHOUGH I DON'T REALLY CARE IF YOU ARE
SHUDDER
KISS
UWA-AA~!
SOME-ONE..
Masa-suke ...!!!
MASA-SUKE!
MASA-SUKE!!!
DO SOME-THING...!
MASA-SUKE!

MASA-SU—...
THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH, LORD TOU-NO-CHUUJOU
THIS ISN'T SOMETHING FOR A SERVANT TO SPEAK OUT ON
...AT THE PREVIOUS PARTY HELD BY THE F. MILY OF THE MINISTER OF THE RIGHT YOU HAD A SECRET RELA-TIONSHIP WITH TWO OF THE PRINCESSES.
I'VE HEARD THAT THE CROWN PRINCE IS VERY PRO-TECTIVE OVER THOSE TWO PRINCESSES.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT...?!

WHEN THE OTHER OFFICIALS ARE APPOINTED IN THE FALL I WONDER WHAT SORT OF POSITION YOU'D BE GIVEN...?
BOW
I HAVE LOTS OF ACQUAINTANCES AND
I KNOW THAT THE MINISTER OF THE RIGHT WILL ALSO BE VERY ANGRY IF HE LEARNS OF THIS
Bye!
Give my regards to your sister!
DASH
glare
WHY DIDN'T YOU COME RESCUE ME SOONER?!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST MESSING AROUND..
DIDN'T YOU THINK THAT I, YOUR LORD, WAS IN A CRISIS JUST NOW?!
I THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR SOMEONE OF MY POSITION TO INTERFERE..

YOU'RE ALWAYS WATCHING ME FROM ONE STEP AWAY LIKE THAT
EVEN THOUGH IT WASN'T LIKE THAT IN THE PAST
IF IT HAD BEEN THE PERSON YOU LOVED
YOU WOULD HAVE SAVED THEM RIGHT AWAY, WOULDN'T YOU?
...IT CAN NEVER BE LIKE IT WAS WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN AGAIN
LIKE THE SEASONS CHANGE,
WE HAVE ALSO BECOME ADULTS AND AS SUCH WE MUST KEEP OUR POSITIONS IN MIND

IF YOU'RE CONSTANTLY WORRIED ABOUT YOUR "POSITION"
THEN WOULDN'T IT BE FINE IF IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US?!
...
Hmm
IF IT WAS AN ORDER, WOULD YOU ACT LIKE YOU DID IN THE PAST?
THAT'S THE ONLY THING I CANNOT DO.
Sigh
SOS!
YOUNG LORD?!

SPLASH
GO FETCH IT!
YOU CAN FOLLOW THAT COMMAND, CAN'T YOU?!
...
IF THAT'S YOUR COMMAND
JUMP
JUMP
SPLASH
SPLASH
TO THINK YOU REALLY JUMPED IN...!
IDI-!
MASA-SUKE!
SPLASH

SLAM
YOU'RE SO STUPID
MASA SUKE!!!
SLAM
YOUNG LORD!!!
Why?!
...JEEZ, YOU'RE SO RECKLESS.
WHO IS?
TO LISTEN TO MY SELFISH-NESS
IF ANYONE WERE TO SEE YOU WITHOUT YOUR HEADDRESS IT WOULD CAUSE EMBARRASSMENT FOR YOU
WE'RE IN MY HOUSE!
EVEN SO!

EVEN NOW, THAT YOU'RE SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD, YOU STILL WANT TO HAVE THE CONNECTION WE HAD BEFORE YOU BECAME AN ADULT?
IS THAT WRONG?
YOU'RE ALWAYS LIKE THAT.
YOU ONLY DO YOUR DUTY AS A SERVANT.
EVEN THOUGH I WANT TO KNOW THE REAL YOU, LIKE I DID IN THE PAST....
THAT'S TROUBLE-SOME FOR ME
?
THE REASON WHY I INTEN-TIONALLY MADE OUR CONNEC-TION SO THAT I WAS BE-NEATH YOU,
IS NOT SOMETHING YOU WERE AWARE OF

IF I WERE TO ACT ON MY FEELINGS,
I WOULD HURT YOU.
THAT'S WHY IF I COULD JUST MAKE YOU HAPPY, THEN THAT WOULD MAKE ME HAPPY...
Eh?!
"SO LONG AS THAT PERSON IS HAPPY, THEN—"
"EVEN IF MY FEELINGS CAN'T REACH THEM,"
Masasuke is—
With me...?
I'M THE SAME AS LORD TOU-NO-CHUUJOU.
SINCE I ALSO HARBOR EVIL THOUGHTS TOWARDS YOU.

DO YOUR WORST.
IF I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR TRUE MOTIVATIONS, I'LL BE HAPPY.
THAT'S FINE, ISN'T IT?
TRY DOING WHAT YOU WANT.
YOUNG LORD?!
DID YOU REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT MY WORDS MEANT?!
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD.
YOU'RE AN IRRITATING GUY

...YOUNG LORD,
IS THIS REALLY ALL RIGHT?
IT'S FINE, THAT'S WHY I DID THAT.
PULL
With Masasuke as my partner I'm fine.
I see.
It's not terrible when I was with Tou-no-Chuujou, but

I'm in love with Masasuke too.

HAA!
AH!
FU!
AH!
I FORGOT MY POSITION AND DID SOMETHING TERRIBLY RUDE...

...
I WILL ACCEPT ANY PUNISHMENT.
..THIS GUY-!
FOR NOW,
I WANT TO DRINK SOMETHING COLD
I'LL BRING IT RIGHT AWAY
NH!
gulp
HERE
...

. IT'S LUKE-WARM
I'M VERY SORRY. I'LL BRING YOU A FRESH GLASS. .
IT'S FINE
SINCE YOU BROUGHT IT, I'LL DRINK IT, EVEN IF IT'S POISON
. YOUNG LORD!
Sip
The first love between the young lord
Of the Minister of the Center and his servant, ripens like this.